

Message Text

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PAGE 01 COTONO 00551 150116Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00
DODE-00 EB-08 HEW-04 IO-13 ICA-11 HA-05 /067 W
-----024615 151908Z /65
R 140926Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY COTONOU
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 628

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE COTONOU 0551

FOR AF/W; ALSO PASS AID/W/OFDA

E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: EAID DM
SUBJECT: BENINESE REQUEST FOR DISASTER ASSISTANCE IN FIRE
STRICKEN VILLAGE

1. GOVERNMENT OF PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BENIN (GPRB)
FOREIGN MINISTER ALLADAYE INVITED ALL CHIEFS OF MISSION
RESIDENT IN COTONOU TO MEETING APRIL 13 TO SOLICIT ASSISTANCE
FOR POPULATION OF AGUEGUES, A LAKE VILLAGE NEAR PORTO NOVO.
A FIRE WHICH BROKE OUT IN AGUEGUES ON APRIL 4 DESTROYED 600
HOMES AND, ACCORDING TO FOREIGN MINISTER, HAS LEFT 4000
PEOPLE HOMELESS. FOREIGN MINISTER SAID BENIN WOULD WELCOME
ANY FORM OF ASSISTANCE BUT WAS ESPECIALLY LOOKING FOR MEANS
OF PROVIDING SHELTER FOR AFFECTED POPULATION NOW THAT RAINY
SEASON HAS BEGUN. HE SPOKE OF POSSIBILITY OF PURCHASING
OR OTHERWISE OBTAINING CANVAS TARPULIN MATERIAL TO RIG
SHELTERS UNTIL NEW STRUCTURES CAN BE BUILT.

2. DURING QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD FOLLOWING
MINISTER'S PLEA, ALLADAYE WAS UNABLE TO GIVE DOLLAR
ESTIMATE OF DAMAGE INVOLVED. IT WAS CLEAR MOREOVER
FROM HIS REPLIES THAT GPRB HAD NOT ESTABLISHED ANY COOR-
DINATING MECHANISM FOR RECEIVING OR ALLOCATING
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ASSISTANCE. FOREIGN MINISTER SUGGESTED THAT COUNTRIES
INTERESTED IN BENIN MEET NEXT WEEK TO ARRANGE FOR VISIT
TO SITE AND TO DISCUSS NATURE OF ASSISTANCE WHICH
VARIOUS COUNTRIES COULD PROVIDE.

3. AS A RESULT OF ALLADAY'S LACK OF PREPARATION AND HIS
INABILITY TO CITE SPECIFIC QUANTITIES OF ITEMS NECESSARY,

NO CHIEF OF MISSION SHOWED SIGNS OF MAKING ANY COMMITMENT
TO BEININ UNTIL MORE DATA IS AVAILALBE. UNITED NATIONS
REPRESENTATIVE TOLD CHARGE AFTER MEETING THAT IN
PRINCIPLE HE WAS PREPARED TO ASSIST BUT THAT HE WOULD
NOT RAISE GOVERNMENT'S HOPES UNTIL HE HAD HAD A CHANCE TO
ASCERTAIN ACTUAL EXTENT OF DAMAGE. CHARGE SAID THIS
REFLECTED HIS OGN FEELINGS ON MATTER. POST WILL KEEP
DEPARTMENT AND AID/W INFORMED OF DEVELOPMENTS AS
THEY OCCUR.
THOMPSON

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Disposition Case Number: n/a
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TAGS: EAID, DM
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